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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2738
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RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RUEHHM/AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH CITY 2937

UNCLAS HO CHI MINH CITY 000625

SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: DISSIDENT BUI KIM THANH TO BE RELEASED SOON?

REF: HCMC 221 AND PREVIOUS

¶1. (SBU) On June 13 and 14, we spoke separately by phone with two relatives of Bui Kim Thanh, the HCMC land rights activist who has been involuntarily confined to a mental institution since November 2006. Her relatives said that, during a visit to the hospital in early June, Thanh reported that the Bien Hoa Mental Hospital had sent a letter to HCMC Prosecutors office requesting that they authorize her medical reexamination. The hospital noted that she had made "good progress." Thanh and the family members believe that after the reexamination she will be released.

¶2. (SBU) Comment: To date, the HCMC Prosecutor's office -- which formally ordered Thanh to be involuntarily committed -- has not responded to the Hospital's request for reexamination. We are keeping in close touch with the family on possible progress in the case. We will press HCMC authorities to push the Prosecutor's office to act should it drag its feet on making a decision in this case. End Comment.

WINNICK